



GEO (Golf Environment Organisation)
& Le Golf National

INTERNATIONAL CASE STUDY:

Golf Course Development:
Course Ecology

OVERVIEW

This month's International Case Study highlights the work of the GEO (Golf Environment Organisation.) This international not for profit organisation is dedicated to helping golf communities worldwide improve and credibly demonstrate leadership in sustainability.

"GEO Certified" is golf's assurance for environmental enhancement and community contribution, recognising commitment, performance and continual improvement. Through their work Golf is poised to emerge as a leader in sustainable sport and business. GEO believe that golf can bring positive value to nature and communities, in cities, towns and villages around the world.

A recent recipient of the GEO certification is Le Golf National, host venue for the 2018 Ryder Cup. This international symbol signifies their excellent value to nature and its communities as well as efficient use of their natural resources. We will highlight a number of their achievements to show what is possible for golf clubs in New Zealand.

CHALLENGES



WATER

External environmental regulations can restrict water availability to courses.



FINDING VOLUNTEERS

Some climates challenge the basic concept of sustainable golf with unavoidable impacts during development.



ADMINISTRATION

Supplying the club with products in a sustainable way can be a challenge.

SOLUTION

Through its practices and policies, Le Golf National is enhancing its commitment to sustainability. The Club plans the construction of a new water reservoir which will stop and collect all the excess water coming from the golf courses achieving both water savings & recycling. New drainage installation will be addressed in the coming years, collecting and directing water to the irrigation reservoirs.

Significant reduction of maintained turf areas is occurring in both the Aigle & Oiselet courses, enhancing shrubs, wetlands, woodlands and scrub vegetation in out rough areas. Those areas are sheltering wildlife and other vegetation.

Supply chain and pollution control is also notable in the facility. As an example of waste management, the Club plans the installation of a self-cleaning plant for the pieces of machinery. Sand capping and

topdressing in different playing areas is achieved by the recycle of sand coming from the project "Paris Plage", which creates an artificial beach in Paris every year by means of tonnes of sand.

Finally, the community role that Le Golf National plays is outstanding. Some examples of this are the participation on social programmes such as Crocogolf and the teamwork with environmental agencies.

RESULTS

40
HECTARES

40 hectares of the site has been dedicated to grassland habitat and the area of unmaintained rough has increased to improve habitat connection.

50
BEEHIVES

50 Beehives have been added, surrounded by planted wildflower areas. As a result they have a small honey production (20 x 250gm pots distributed to club and ffgolfs employees).

FREE
PRACTICE
FACILITY

Free practice facility for school students has been made available during parts of the day. The club also provides free lessons for golf course neighbours.

CONCLUSION / SUMMARY

Le Golf National quite naturally set sustainable development as a pivotal concern. One reason for the focus of attention is that the club is also the home of the French Golf Federation (ffgolf) and shares ffgolf's public service mission delegated from the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Developing the game of golf and making it accessible to as many people as possible are the ffgolf's and the clubs essential callings.

Motivated by its ambitions and the role clubs have to play to alert the general public, the club has tried to integrate the sustainable development issues to its daily business and maintenance models.

Furthermore it has initiated many actions around 3 key main stays

1. To develop golf accessibility through Croco Golf (junior golf programme) and the implementation of free introductory golf lessons.
2. To protect biodiversity, signing the "Water Charter", placing beehives around the courses and partnering with the National Museum of Natural History



3. Nurturing close relationships with organisations, people and companies from the area.

Pablo Munez Vega the independent GEO verifier commented on the practices and policies observed. He said "Beyond being a public golf facility that offers golf to a variety of players and hosts major golf tournaments, Le Golf National continues to enhance its commitment to sustainability"

Le Golf National is also involved in a very exciting heritage restoration project of the "Porte du Merantais", an old gate to Versailles Palace, is a remarkable mission that the Club is addressing in conjunction with the local government. Once restored, the gate will be used as storm shelter for golfers while maintaining its original design

In New Zealand the Farm at Cape Kidnappers is currently participating in the GEO OnCourse programme. Showing a commitment to continually improve in the important sustainability areas of nature, water, energy, supply chain, pollution and community.

More information can be found at www.golfenvironment.org



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